



CONGRESSIONAL HEARING RESUME

106th Congress

Date: 26 October 1999

SUBJECT: Hearing on Military Activities in Support of Operation Allied Force

COMMITTEE: House Armed Services Committee
Subcommittee on Military Readiness

CHAIRMAN: The Honorable Herbert Bateman

MEMBERS PRESENT (bold face):

REPUBLICANS

Saxby Chambliss (GA)
Walter Jones (NC)
Bob Riley (AL)
Duncan Hunter (CA)
James Hansen (UT)
Curt Weldon (PA)

Tillie Fowler (FL)
James Talent (MO)
Terry Everett (AL)
Jim Gibbons (NV)
Don Sherwood (PA)

DEMOCRATS

Solomon Ortiz (TX)
Norman Sisisky (VA)
John Spratt (SC)
Owen Pickett (VA)
Robert Underwood (GU)
Rod Blagojevich (IL)

Adam Smith (WA)
James Maloney (CT)
Mike McIntyre (NC)
Ciro Rodriquez (TX)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Gene Taylor (D-MS)

WITNESSES:

PANEL 1

Gen John Jumper, USAF, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Commander, Allied Air Forces Central Europe

VAdm Daniel Murphy, USN, Commander, Sixth Fleet

Brig Gen Robert Flanagan, USMC, Deputy Commanding General, II MEF

PANEL 2

Gen Tony Robertson USAF, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Transportation Command and Commander, Air Mobility Command

Lt Gen John Handy, USAF, DCS for Installations and Logistics

VADM James Amerault, USN, DCNO for Logistics

Information contained in this resume was obtained during an open hearing. It will not be released outside of the Department of Defense (DoD) agencies until published hearing transcripts have been released by the Committee, and only to the extent it is in accord with published hearing procedures.

Prepared by: Lt Col Amy Bouchard/Maj Tom Henwood
Phone number: 697-7950

Date: 26 October 1999

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Subcommittee convened this hearing to receive testimony concerning military activities in support of Operation Allied Force (OAF). Primary concern expressed by the Committee was availability of spares. Key issues raised during Panel 1 included the effect of OAF on overall readiness, need for additional LD/HD assets, target approval process, capability gap between the U.S. and our allies, and the impact advanced weapons (SA-10s) would have had on the air campaign. The Committee is looking for ways to help the Services, particularly with regard to endstrength and increasing the topline. As Chairman Bateman said at the conclusion of Panel 1, "There is little more we can do for you if you don't tell us what you need." Panel 2 did not focus on Kosovo lessons learned; the actual focus was on strategic lift and the overall health of the airlift fleet. There was also discussion on manning and retention of critical career fields across the Air Force.

The Subcommittee was called to order at 1005.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Bateman

Home station units were the "bill payers" for deployed units, especially in the Air Force. Said 40% of the Air Force was involved in Operation Allied Force. Lack of spares is a major stumbling block. Also interested in hearing about the impact of personnel shortages and the reconstitution efforts of the Services.

Rep Ortiz

Rep Ortiz's greatest concern is assessing and understanding the overall readiness of our forces. He expressed his feeling that we will never dig ourselves out of the hole of declining readiness. He's frustrated about spares. He was told funding provided by the Committee for spares was sufficient and that the Air Force was expecting an upturn in the availability of parts this year. He reiterated his concern with the serious decline in readiness which jeopardizes our ability to execute the 2-MTW strategy and places our troops at risk. When can we expect to see an upturn in availability of parts in the Air Force?

WITNESS STATEMENTS

PANEL 1

Gen Jumper

Although weapons and technology normally steal the show, our people make the difference. Thanked the Committee on behalf of the force for pay raise, pay table reform, repeal of redux. OAF was a testament to the NATO alliance. It was a complex operation--we operated from 47 locations, flew 38,000 sorties while only losing two aircraft. OAF was casualty free but not risk free. Over 700 SA-3s and SA-6s shot at our crews. OAF was the most precise war in history--out of more than 9,4000 designated target aim points, over 70 percent were struck by precision munitions. Cumulatively, OAF had a worldwide impact on our readiness.

VAdm Murphy

Our number one readiness concern is the numbers--of ships, aircraft, munitions, and people. One thing that has gone unmentioned during the after action reviews of OAF is the ability of the Services to operate as one team. Only the U.S. Air Force can put together an air campaign of the size and complexity of OAF. The Navy's key contribution is its agility.

Brig Gen Flanagan

Highlighted the contribution of the EA-6B to OAF. Shortfalls were not having a NVG or Link 16 capability on the EA-6Bs.

PANEL 2

Gen Robertson

The fact is that you can't try warfighting without the support of USTRANSCOM. All CINCs around the globe depend on USTRANSCOM to support their mission and get them to whatever contingency they are tasked to support. We pride ourselves with the capability to support the CINCs with what they need. We depend on our people to do the job, but we are concerned that retention and re-enlistment rates have not made a turn around for the better. On the positive side we have seen improvements with modernization of Sealift, Airlift (with the C-17), increased use Prepo, and increased use of Jt. Planning and Execution. Currently Sealift is very healthy with the improvements that have been made. We are very concerned with the overall health of strategic airlift; especially with the aging fleet of 141s and C-5s. We are faced with increasing requirements with declining capabilities.

We also need to be concerned with the demand we are placing on our reserve force, particularly in the tanker community. The Reserves provide 59% of our tanker force; which is a concern considering the strain and high OPS Tempo placed on this portion of our force. The quality people we have are responsible for making the mission happen. Thanked the HASC for their continued support.

Lt Gen Handy

Thanked the Committee for their support, mentioned he provided his written statement for the record and was ready to answer any questions from the Members.

VAdm Amerault

Thanked the HASC for their continued support. Discussed the great support the Theodore Roosevelt provided Allied Force. He also mentioned the outstanding support the Navy Seabees provided the Humanitarian Relief operation building structures and infrastructure support. Thanked the Committee for the opportunity to be there.

KEY COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS

PANEL 1

- **Rep Bateman** asked **VAdm Murphy** about the carrier gap in the Adriatic in the beginning of the air campaign. **Adm Murphy** responded that it took 14 days to get a carrier on station. This was during the most intense period of ethnic cleansing. **Rep Bateman** also asked about pulling a carrier in the Far East. **Adm Murphy** explained that the Air Force backfilled the carrier requirement.
- **Rep Bateman** asked about the problems of target selection approval and the impact this had on the operation. **Gen Jumper** answered OAF was not an ideal air campaign. As expected, we experienced difficulty forging consensus in a defensive alliance. Offensive, out-of-area operations disturbed some members of the alliance. We also had to compensate for the concerns about collateral damage. Although there has been some discussion about whether or not we should have “gone downtown” earlier in the campaign, that was not a politically viable option. Weather was also a big factor. It was the combination of the contributions of Task Force Hawk (unique capability to predict actions of ground forces) and the weather improving that finally allowed us to effectively target forces in the field.
- **Rep Ortiz** asked how the Services have done replacing funds in accounts drained to pay for our participation in OAF. **Gen Jumper** deferred to Gen Handy in Panel 2 but stated that if we stopped buying parts, the Air Force could run at a high readiness level for two years but it would be on the backs of our magnificent people. MC rates 4 to 5 percentage points less than during DESERT STORM. Efforts of the Committee starting to have an effect. Cannibalization rates are stabilizing--down from 12.8 to 12.2 in the last quarter. **Rep Ortiz** again highlighted his concerns about spares. He said the Committee has focused on this issue for the last four to five years and has increased funding for spares. Yet, during the Chiefs’ testimony on 21 Oct, they said the problem would take another 18 months to fix. Hopes to work with the Services to fix this problem.
- **Rep Sisisky** said this is the second time in three years we’ve had to divert a carrier for the Far East to the Adriatic or Persian Gulf. Asked if the Navy needs another carrier. He also said we should have learned about the need for a NVG capability on the EA-6B during DESERT STORM. With the need for LD/HD assets so great, Rep Sisisky asked how we could afford the F-22. He also said Rep Hunter was happy to hear that the B-2 was the star of the Kosovo operation. **Gen Jumper** explained we were able to retarget the B-2s inflight with brute force. We depend on the LD/HD assets to pinpoint where targets are to limit collateral damage. Another important capability demonstrated during OAF was the intelligence reachback capability to Beale. **VAdm Murphy** gave the Committee an example of this capability. Prior to launching Tomahawks at a desired target his intel officers on the 6th Fleet command ship had to verify the target. They talked to the folks at Beale who had a U-2 flying overhead. The U-2 sent the picture back to Beale and confirmed the target ID with the intel officers on the command ship. Within 15 minutes, three Tomahawks were enroute to the target.
- **Rep Fowler** said the Air Force flew 79% of the ISR sorties in Kosovo? Are your ISR assets adequate? **Gen Jumper** explained there is a constant demand for these assets. There are not enough of them and that’s why they are managed by the Joint Staff to make sure the CINC’s requirements are met. TEMPO for the crews is extremely high with many exceeding the goal of 120 days TDY per year. Our endstrength is not enough to deal with it. We need to look at this. Demand for LD/HD assets during day to day operations may be greater than the 2-MTW requirement.

- **Rep Spratt** asked what the impact to OAF would have been if our opponent had possessed an intermediate range, cruise, or theater ballistic missile. **Gen Jumper** responded that this has him worried. If Milosevic had SA-10s we would have had to fight our way in with brute force. We are not adequately prepared for this threat. This is why we need the F-22.
- **Rep Spratt** also asked about the gap in capabilities that exists between our allies and us. **Gen Jumper** said he hoped that the recommendations that came out of the Washington summit in the summer would help close the gap. At the military level, our Allies have learned the lesson.
- **Rep Taylor** asked the witness what their first preference would be in next year's budget based on what they learned in Kosovo. **VAdm Murphy** answered with the need for standoff precision weapons and mentioned the success of the B-2/JDAM lashup. **Gen Jumper** said he is most concerned within the Air Force about the lack of properly manned staffs. Said he toyed with the idea of shutting down a squadron just to get enough rated experience on the staff to help plan the air campaign. **Rep Taylor** then asked if a call-up would have helped. **Gen Jumper** explained he needed individuals to augment the staff, not units. USAFE will amplify the response to Rep Taylor for the record.
- **Rep Hunter** asked if the witnesses were confident with the kill numbers for tanks (he cited 120). **Gen Jumper** responded that Gen Clark originally stated 110 tanks had been destroyed. We later visited over 1,000 places where we suspected we engaged heavy armor and have confirmed 93 tanks destroyed. **Rep Hunter** then asked what the formula is for NATO reimbursing the U.S. based on amount of resources committed to an operation. **Gen Jumper** will provide the formula for the record. **Rep Hunter** also made a pitch for guidance kits that can be strapped on to dumb bombs to give them a stand-off precision capability (*He made this same point in the 19 Oct Mil Procurement Subcommittee hearing on Kosovo Lessons Learned*). **Gen Jumper** said USAFE has a combat mission needs statement related to modification of dumb bombs and is looking at the issue. **Rep Hunter** asked for a briefing on the state of play for this type of modification (*will work with LLW to answer the mail on this one*).
- **Rep Bateman** concluded the first panel by saying there is little more that the Committee can do for the Services unless they let the Members know what they need.

PANEL 2

- **Rep Bateman** asked **Gen Robertson** to discuss what shortfalls we have in strategic airlift and what can we do to fix it. Gen Robertson responded that the challenge of fixing strategic airlift is that it is an agonizingly slow process. On a positive note the performance of the C-17 is absolutely superb. The challenge that we face is that peacetime requirements are outstripping our wartime requirements. We have 120 C-17 programmed to replace our 270 C-141s. A mobility requirement study is currently in work and the results will be out sometime later this year. This study should help determine what and how much Strategic Lift we need to support our National Military Strategy. It is imperative for us to fix the C-5. The tanker community is manpower challenged more than equipment challenged. We are currently still operating as the same crew ratio of the Cold War days of sitting SAC Alert; we need more manpower today!
- **Rep Bateman** asked **Gen Robertson** what we can do to fix the mission capable rates of the C-5. Gen Robertson replied that it is a three phased program 1) need R&D for a new engine that will be a commercial derivative, and in the mean time we need to complete some interim engine component changes, 2) replace cockpit avionics, 3) level out manning levels of key career fields with more experience. The readiness challenges of our aircraft do impact personnel retention.
- **Rep Bateman** asked **Vice Admiral Amerault** the impact of not having the training range at Vieges. He stated that it is a huge impact, particularly with PGM training.

- **Rep Ortiz** asked **Lt Gen Handy** why we are still experiencing spare parts problems. Lt Gen Handy stated that aircraft spares are a complex issue that includes dealing with aging aircraft, technical surprises, and the reciprocal effect previous years low funding levels. With additional money provided by the Congress our stockage levels have improved and we should really start to see improvement by Jun/Jul 00. Since Jan 99 AFMC has reduced their backlog from 600,00 down to 400,00.
- **Rep Ortiz** asked **Lt Gen Handy** about recent articles concerning aircraft safety that discussed faulty manufacturing. Gen Handy stated that he was absolutely confident that the AF Safety Investigation process is the best there is and if there is something wrong we identify so it can be fixed.
- **Rep Spratt** asked **Gen Robertson** about being tasked for 2 MTWs and only being resourced for 1. What do we need to do to address this challenge buy more C-17s? How long is the C-17 production line supposed to be open? Gen Robertson stated that an Analysis of Alternatives is currently in work and he emphasized that the C-5 is critical to the equation. He also discussed the option of re-engining the C-5. The dilemma is predicting if the C-5 re-engining will really fix the overall readiness of the aircraft. The C-17 production should be open until 2006.
- **Rep Hunter** asked **Gen Robertson** if a lack of qualified technicians is part of the C-5 problem? Gen Robertson stated yes manning and excessive maintenance manhours are a problem. To fix retention we must continue to focus on pay improvements, bonuses, spare parts and quality of life for the family. **Lt Gen Handy** concurred and stated that this was an AF wide problem not just isolated to the C-5.
- **Rep Bateman** stated that we need an infusion of resources across the top line to fix our readiness problems.
- **Rep Hunter** asked why the military had not taken advantage of a law to trade existing assets/real estate at BRAC locations with big Developers for the exchange of building base housing? All witnesses stated they were not familiar with this law.

Chairman Bateman thanked all witnesses for their time and commitment.

The hearing concluded at 1300.